

Portage Prepares

Helping Portage County Citizens prepare for emergencies and disasters.

2013

Information for Seniors

People aged 65 years or older are less likely to sense and respond to changes in temperature. People in this category should follow the recommendations in this newsletter.



Office of Homeland
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People suffer heat-related illnesses such as heat stroke and heat exhaustion when the body's temperature-control system is overloaded. Sweating is the body's natural way of cooling itself. In some situations, especially in periods of high humidity, sweating alone will not provide an adequate release of body heat.

Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible. Contact your [local health department](#) or locate an air-conditioned shelter in your area.

- Do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device during an extreme heat event.
- Drink more water than usual and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
- Check on a friend or neighbor and have someone do the same for you.
- Don't use the stove or oven to cook—it will make you and your house hotter.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Take cool showers or baths to cool down.
- Check the local news for health and safety

updates.

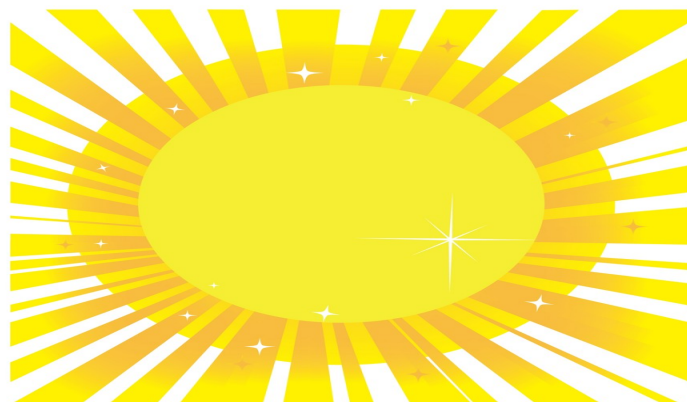
- Seek medical care immediately if you have, or someone you know has, symptoms of heat-related illness like muscle cramps, headaches, nausea or vomiting.

Drink Cool Fluids

- Help your body sweat and cool down by staying well hydrated with water. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Adults should drink eight 8-ounce glasses of water each day. Monitor your

body; you may need to drink more on hot and humid days.

- Drink from two to four cups of water every hour while working or exercising outside.
- Avoid fluids that contain alcohol or caffeine, because they can add to dehydration and increase the effects of heat illness.
- Do not take salt tablets without a doctor's advice.



Know the Signs of Heat Exhaustion

- Remember, heat-related symptoms can come on quickly.
- Symptoms of heat exhaustion are: heavy sweating, paleness, muscle cramps, tiredness, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea or fainting. People experiencing these symptoms should be moved to a cool, shady or air-conditioned area, and provided cool, non-alcoholic beverages.
- Remove layers of clothing, if possible.

Know the Signs of Heat Stroke

- Heat stroke is a

potentially life-threatening condition, characterized by: a body temperature of 103 degrees or higher; red, hot and dry skin with no sweating; rapid pulse; headache; dizziness; nausea; confusion; unconsciousness; and gray skin color.

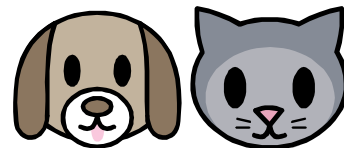
- People experiencing heat stroke need immediate medical assistance.
- Before help arrives, begin cooling the victim by any means possible, such as spray from a garden hose or by placing the person in a cool tub of water.

Don't Forget Your Pets

- Animals kept outdoors should have plenty of fresh water and a covered area to get out of the sun and cool down.
- Consider jogging in the early morning or evening to help keep pets and yourself cool.

Monitor or Limit Outdoor Activities

- Plan outdoor activities when the sun is less direct.
- Wear loose-fitting, light-colored clothing.
- Move to the shade or into an air-conditioned building at the first signs of heat illness.



The best defense against heat-related problems is prevention. Staying cool and making simple changes in fluid intake, activities and clothing during hot weather will help keep you safe and healthy.

- Adults should mandate frequent "breaks for very young children.
- Children involved in team sports should be closely monitored for signs of heat stress. Consideration should be given to modifying practice or play during the hottest parts of the day.

Indoor Water Conservation Tips Prior to a Drought

GENERAL

- Never pour water down the drain when there may be another use for it. For example, use it to water your indoor plants or garden.
- Repair dripping faucets by replacing washers. One drop per second wastes 2,700 gallons of water per year.
- Check all plumbing for leaks and have any leaks repaired by a plumber.
- Retrofit all household faucets by installing aerators with flow restrictors.
- Install an instant hot water heater on your sink.
- Insulate your water pipes to reduce heat loss and prevent them from breaking.
- Install a water-softening system only when the minerals in the water would damage your pipes. Turn the softener off while on vacation.
- Choose appliances that are more energy and water efficient.

Portage Prepares is a county education program for preparing Portage County communities to meet the challenges of emergencies and/or disasters in order to be safe and reduce injury. Portage Prepares is a program of the Portage County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and its Advisory Committee under the guidance of the Portage County Board of Commissioners. For additional information on emergency preparedness, go to our website at: www.co.portage.oh.us/portageprep/ or follow us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/PortagePrepares or follow us on Twitter @PortagePrep.